

# What is lacking in our present education system

[Education](#)



The issue is not only about doing away with evaluation on the basis of bookish knowledge and memory but what to do in its place? To my mind, the word "bookish" actually implies impractical and therefore we should cover all aspects (big picture) of what maybe deemed practical education instead of just discussing the curriculum.

Even mystics like Osho and Krishnamurthy have said that through Education alone, social transformation is possible and both also stressed the need for education to fulfill its real purpose- help the child find his vocation in life. I could not trace the link of the original article "As a Parent" by Wipro Chairman Azim Premji but his words are worth repeating :

"The primary purpose of a school is to guide the child's discovery of herself and her world and to identify and mature the child's talents. Just as each seed contains the future tree, each child is born with infinite potential. In the article he suggests that many teachers and parents try to be potters instead of Gardeners in moulding their children's future." Imagine a school in which sees children as seeds to be nurtured-here the teacher is a gardener who tries to bring out the potential already present in the child. This is very different from the current view which sees the child as clay to be moulded where the teachers and parents are potters deciding what shape the clay should take. There is an old Chinese saying , "Give a seed to a potter and you shall have a bonsai." In a nutshell, as a teacher and parent, be a gardener, not a potter.

The great Philosopher Socrates had said "Education is not the filling of a vessel but the kindling of a flame". The word Education itself comes from the word "Educere" which means to bring out what is already in and not blindly stuff in. The purpose of Education is to detect talent proactively. For this, it is <https://assignbuster.com/what-is-lacking-in-our-present-education-system/>

essential that education has to be based on application and intelligence( with open book exams wherever necessary) instead of trying to test memory of knowledge. This is especially so in the era of internet where everybody can have the knowledge but it is only one's intelligence with which one can distinguish or differentiate oneself. Memory does not have that much significance since everything is there on the net- its application that should matter and be tested. Since people tend to remember more of what they happen to be interested in, memory can be a tool to know vocation instead of an end in itself. Children can be made aware of main memory techniques.

Einstein had said that Imagination is more important than knowledge. Each person's imagination is different and therefore he has to be guided correctly to choose his occupation in life where he is going to spend a majority of waking hours. Real education should enable you to find out what is uniquely you. That is what matters in practical life, not bookish knowledge.

Natural talent often manifests well without any formal coaching. I played lawn Tennis for several years but was not satisfied with the backhand(bane of many racquet games). My younger brother got it right in the first week itself without any coaching in such a brilliant manner that many players complimented him. My wife is qualified in English honors but it is me, an MBA who has written articles and poems for magazines and newspapers. Similarly, she does certain business work much better than I do. My father does much better trading in shares than me despite not having any formal training in Technical analysis(graphs) which I have. I once worked in a company where the rise of one person was much faster than four others

though all of them were from the same batch from the same institute. Talent is more important than the tool(knowledge).

There was an article recently that corporate india was willing to take only 20% of the total pool because people coming out of institutes were not practically talented. This is because functional, operative, practical talent in the corporate world is different from analysis taught in MBA schools. Also, MBA is about analysis but real life is about synthesis which is completely different. Even in the engineering context, John Adair, in his book, effective innovation while giving the example of a trained artist who excelled as an inventor concluded that " Engineering is just a state of mind. You do not need a vast amount of knowledge" All this clearly shows that process(imagination & thinking) is more important than input(knowledge) especially memorized bookish knowledge. We should give equal if not more importance to humotech in addition to looking for biotech and infotech.

Since not too much knowledge is required for talented people, short term courses should be available for those who may have made a wrong choice of occupation.

Even in our Shastras it is given that the Sukshma(subjective-person) is more important than the sthula(objective-knowledge ). What a person does with a particular knowledge is more important than knowledge per se and to detect that, personal attention has to be given- the kind of personal attention that is given by a Tennis coach when he feeds 60 balls to his pupil one after another and monitors close progress. Then it is possible to discover that person's Svadharma(purpose in life according to Shastras). Each of the Pandavas being unique in their own way, one of the teachings of the Mahabharat is to <https://assignbuster.com/what-is-lacking-in-our-present-education-system/>

develop your unique quality. Even generally " Teaching the student teaches the teacher"- more so if the teacher tries to study the student.

It would not be out of place to mention here that the initiator of Lateral thinking, Edward de Bono had stated that thinking should be taught in schools because many intellectuals/knowledgeable people were poor thinkers. Thinking also helps in detecting potential. In India's context, not making lateral thinking a part of formal education is absurd because the greatest post independent rags to riches story ( Dhirubhai Ambani) was because of lateral thinking.

Other kinds of thinking can also be taught.

It should be mentioned here that countries like Russia have made chess compulsory to force students to think logically. Sites like braingle. com insist that mind games also form a part of cognitive reserve and should be a part of formal education. This is in the context of Ralph Waldo Emerson's " Concentration is the secret of success in politics, in war - in all management of human affairs". Concentration can be because of interest or one could say mental strength -both should be monitored.

Education must also impart good vocational and physical training and inculcate values to respect all vocations/professions- that is something we have to learn from the United States where a janitor can talk to a professor on one to one basis on the same table as an equal. The caste system which determines occupations by birth is fundamentally incorrect. All that also causes inter-personal problems in practical management.

In books like " Karma, Destiny and Career", it is given what can happen if you try to pursue an exalted occupation(lawyer, doctor) when in reality your real vocation maybe relatively humble(carpenter, plumber). In New york, a child psychologist became a taxi driver because driving was his passion.(This may seem absurd but normally people seeking artistic satisfaction have such problems) Therefore, formal education should give equal respect to all occupations and people should be respected for what they are instead of snobishness of degrees and qualifications associated with certain exalted professions.

It would not be out of place to mention here that some people who have won nobel prizes(DNA, Microchip) have admitted that not being too formally qualified was an advantage because they could get creative ideas. This is in the context of " Knowledge is food for the ego". If you feel you already know too much, you can't get creative ideas. Students should be aware of all this. (does not imply that one should not be well qualified)

In the Unnited States, one of the ways of dealing with work-misfits is to ask them " What interest did you have as a child?" Why not nip the problem in the bud- when the person is a child? I have come across around 30 Americans who have written books on this subject. This American site summarises best what the education system should be doing:

J. krishnamurthy has even advocated small schools for the purpose of detecting the child's potential . It is very important that each teacher should also be trained as a vocational psychologist and talent scout so that the student does not choose the wrong profession and suffer for life- " The

person who has found his vocation in life is a blessed human being. Let him ask for no other blessedness"- Thomas Carlyle.

All this covers management of self(knowing oneself). Children should also be taught practical management of money(people suffer because of lack of accounting knowledge) and practical psychology( management of people). Nobody in practical life can escape management of money and people.

There still seems to be some hesitation on teachers part where computers are concerned- computers have made possible what Shri Aurobindo said " The teacher should be a guide(not a sage on stage but a guide on the side) and not an instructor and encourage the student to discover the answer for himself". Children should know all main microsoft products thoroughly word, excel, power point , access(programming insight).. Online education maybe convenient but some personal attention from teacher is a must.

Another good thing krishnamurthy suggested was that children must be taught to appreciate nature as a part of formal education from early childhood so that when they grow up, they have some reservations in destroying mother earth if they happen to be in conflict.

In India, emphasis should also be given to team work and group dynamics because Indians have a poor reputation of working in teams. India has a competitive advantage vis-a-vis China (English has been made compulsory there)currently but many Indians cannot speak and write English fluently despite studying in English medium schools. Efforts should be made to ensure that Indians know colloquial English since India cannot afford to lose that advantage.